# ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INDICATORS FOR CALIFORNIA (EPIC)



## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT, PLANS AND EFFORTS TO DATE

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## What is an environmental indicator?

- A measure that presents scientifically based information on environmental conditions.
- An indicator has a significance extending beyond that directly associated with the parameter measured.



## Previous Efforts at Cal/EPA

- Annual Environmental Report and Message of the Governor
- > Environmental Indicators Report

#### Examples of environmental indicators:

- # of days over ozone standard
- % of water bodies supporting beneficial uses
- volume of hazardous wastes generated
- municipal waste diversion rates



## Environmental indicators as new tools for Cal/EPA

Environmental indicators as part of the strategic planning process: "managing toward environmental results"

- formulating policy
- allocating resources for maximum value
- making adjustments to priorities



## Types of Indicators

#### Mission-based

assess status and trends associated with the agency's mission

= Environmental Indicators
for Cal/EPA



## Cal/EPA Strategic Goals

www.calepa.ca.gov/Publications/Reports/stratplans/2000

- Goal 1: Air that is healthy to breathe, sustains and improves our ecosystems and preserves natural and cultural resources.
- **Goal 2:** Rivers, lakes, estuaries and marine waters that are fishable, swimmable, support healthy ecosystems and other beneficial uses.
- Goal 3: Groundwater that is safe for drinking and other beneficial uses.
- Goal 4: Communities that are free from unacceptable human and ecological risks due to exposure from hazardous substances and other potential harmful agents.
- **Goal 5:** Reduce or eliminate the disproportionate impacts of pollution on low-income and minority populations.
- Goal 6: Ensure the efficient use of natural resources.



## Environmental Protection Indicators for California

#### Directive:

OEHHA to collaboratively develop environmental indicators for Cal/EPA

#### Project's first year goal:

To develop a process for identifying environmental indicators and an initial set of indicators using an open, participatory process involving various collaborators.

Report entitled, A Framework for Cal/EPA's Environmental Indicator System



#### Benefits of EPIC

Communicate the condition of the environment to the public

Assess outcomes of environmental compliance and pollution prevention for regulated community

Results-based management system for setting priorities and allocating resources

Process for identifying emerging issues or new monitoring needs

## **EPIC Collaborators**

#### Project staff

#### Advisory groups

Develop Report

- OEHHA
- Cal/EPA BDOs
- Dept. Health Svcs
- Resources Agency
- US EPA

## Interagency Advisory Group

- Cal/EPA BDOs
- Resources Agency
- Dept. Health Svcs
  - US EPA
    - Others

## Input on Project **External**

#### **Advisory Group**

- non-profit groups
- local government
- private sector
- UC/CSU

#### **Contractors**

## Environmental indicator consultant

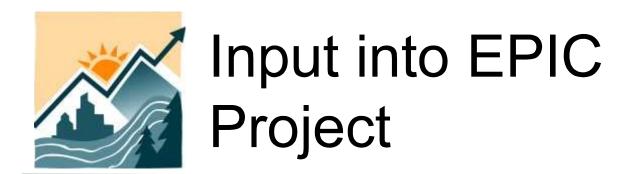
Assist in design and implementation of indicator development process

### Cal/EPA strategic vision consultant

Ensure Framework is consistent with Cal/EPA needs

### Stakeholder coordinator

Coordinate advisory group/ public input



- Today's conference
- Advisory group workshops
- EPIC web site: www.oehha.ca.gov/multimedia/epic/index.html



### **EPIC:** Efforts to Date

#### Phase I

#### **Project initiation**

- enlist project staff
- review of literature
- plan EPIC conference

#### Phase II

Development of "environmental indicator framework"

- "issue structure"
- criteria for indicator selection
- process



### **EPIC:** Next steps

#### Phase III Indicator selection

- identification of priority issues
- selection of indicators

## Phase IV Indicator development, report preparation and publication



## **EPIC:** Next steps

#### Maintenance of EPIC system

- continuous public input and comment on indicator system
- ongoing project staff evaluation, validation and updating of indicator system
- annual evaluation by boards/departments to ensure consistency with strategic plans

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